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REVIEWS.

Organisme et Société. Par RENÉ WORMS. Bibliothèque Sociologique Internationale, I. Paris: V. Giard et E. Brière, 1896. Pp. 412.

La Pathologie Sociale. Par PAUL DE LILIENFELD. Avec une Préface de René Worms. Bibliothèque Sociologique Internationale, II. Paris: V. Giard et E. Brière, 1896. Pp. xlvii+332.

THE charm of analogy! What a power it has been in the mental world! It is simply the imagination taking one of the many directions in which it naturally moves. It is the creative faculty of man which does not always express itself in marble, on canvas, or in measure. It inheres in the man of science as well as in the artist or the poet, and it cannot be suppressed. It lives alike in the savage, the untutored peasant or shepherd, in the half-educated classes of modern society, and in the best stored minds of our day. Think of the poetry that was woven into the early history of the aborigines of America! and the difficulties encountered by the Morgans, the Powells, the Holmes's and the Brintons in eliminating it! Most of it was the immediate fruit of this passion for analogies. Whole lives have been spent in demonstrating that the North American Indians are the lost tribes of Israel. Vast labors have been devoted to tracing their languages back to the Sanskrit. Innumerable analogies have been discovered between their ceremonies, customs, designs, and symbolic figures and those of Asia and Egypt. Their comparatively modern Indian origin is proved by the occurrence of the Buddhist cross or swastica, and their Hellenic ancestry by the analogy between the words *Potomac* and *ποταμός*!

But the love of analogy is not confined to ethnology. It permeates history and literature and gives us those laborious demonstrations by means of mysterious ciphers and cryptograms that Lord Bacon was the natural son of Queen Elizabeth and wrote the plays of Shakespeare. It penetrates every branch of science, and aside from the wonderful

harmony early discovered between the twelve apostles and the twelve planets, it performed the valuable service of creating the constellations of the heavens. It constitutes a sort of animism, and its favorite amusement is to animate the inorganic world and to personify abstract ideas and relations. Many there are who are convinced that this world of ours is in very truth a great living beast with all the organs and functions of a huge animal, and that men are merely parasites upon it like fleas among the hairs of an animal's skin. To the stage of metaphysics or personification belong such analogies as Hobbes' conception of the state as a huge Leviathan, a conception reflected by Herder, Schelling, and Hegel, and Comte's idea of humanity as a *Grand Être*.

Akin to these, and especially to the former, is the somewhat broader analogy of society to an organism, Bluntschli in his *Allgemeines Staatsrecht*, 1852, furnishing a sort of connecting link between the animated state and the social organism. The question of priority in propounding the latter doctrine has arisen. By many it has been supposed that Schäffle's great work, *Bau und Leben des socialen Körpers*, which first appeared in 1875, should be regarded as its true starting point, but not only did the first volume of Lilienfeld's *Gedanken über die Socialwissenschaft der Zukunft*, in which it is fully set forth, appear two years earlier, but, as we learn from the preface of M. Worms to the present work by that author, large parts of the other appeared in the Russian language somewhat earlier still. It has been supposed that Mr. Spencer's treatment of that subject was later, as the first volume of his *Principles of Sociology* did not appear till 1874, but his views are set forth in his *Study of Sociology*, 1873, and much earlier in an article in the *Westminster Review* for January 1860.¹ Nor was this his earliest utterance on the social organism. There is a distinct adumbration of it in the original edition of his *Social Statics*, 1850, pp. 451-453, which is in advance of Bluntschli. But neither can we ascribe to Mr. Spencer the origination of the scientific conception of the analogy between society and an organism. In the fourth volume of Comte's *Positive Philosophy*, that great neglected storehouse of original ideas, this analogy is clearly pointed out in various passages. This volume originally appeared in 1838, and some of the passages may be found on pages 285 and 311 of the third edition.

We have now before us two works from the same press, written by

¹ See this JOURNAL, Vol. I, pp. 317-322.

two of the leaders in the modern sociological movement, reiterating and reënföring, each in its way, this doctrine of the social organism. Both authors are thoroughly imbued with the idea, both are equipped with all the knowledge that can be brought to bear upon the subject, and both books are literally packed with facts and arguments in its support. As we go deeper and deeper into the question and see these facts and arguments piled upon one another like Ossa upon Pelion and Olympus upon Ossa, we feel fairly crushed by their weight. How presumptuous would be any attempt at criticism! Indeed do not these able and adroit advocates disarm all possible criticism by fully stating every objection that has ever been raised and then fully answering it? It would seem that nothing is left to do but to let the objections and their answers stand and exert each its legitimate influence upon differently constituted minds. Still there are some who may be capable of occasionally pausing even in the midst of such a surging torrent and of imagining themselves for the moment out of the stream and quiet spectators upon its banks. From such a standpoint there are certain very general questions, questions that may have no direct relation to any of the specific tenets that are being defended, that may arise and crowd out for the time being the particular considerations that are being urged. To change the figure, some minds are so constituted, that they can and will from time to time suspend all regular business in order to take stock and find out whether their business is running at a profit or a loss.

One of the first of these questions is: What is an analogy? In biology, which is the standpoint of both our authors and of all defenders of the social organism theory in whatever form, this word has a very definite meaning—a technical usage—viz., physiological without anatomical similarity. It is contrasted with *homology*, which is anatomical similarity irrespective of function. If this is all they mean by the analogy between society and an organism, there seems to be no objection to pursuing it to its utmost extent and determining how far social functions resemble organic functions, recognizing all the time that there is no real morphological or structural resemblance any more than there is between the wing of a bat and that of a bird. What, then, does Senator Lilienfeld mean by his oft-repeated expression, “*real* analogy”? Does he mean that there are homologies? It seems difficult to interpret him otherwise. Not only in the present treatise, but throughout his great five-volume work, and, later than either, in a pamphlet

recently issued,¹ he denies that society can be properly called a super-organism, as Mr. Spencer proposes, and insists that it is in very truth an organism. But what manner of organism does he make it out to be? An organism consisting entirely of a "social nervous system" and "social intercellular structure." Is there any such animal or plant as that? How much of the body of an animal consists of "intercellular structure"? Is not this expression to the biologist a contradiction of terms? What is "structure" in biology? Is it not wholly cellular (or vascular, in which the most highly developed cells are differentiated into vessels)? It is true, there are fluids of various kinds flowing through the animal body in various physiological capacities, but the blood is full of corpuscles, *i. e.*, cells, and the lymphatics and secretions are not "structures." There are also some structures in the animal body that for physiological reasons are devoid of sensitive nerves, but they are all made up of cells. Lilienfeld and Worms both agree that individual men constitute the *cells* of the social organism, and both take this in a literal biological sense, that they represent the "real" cells as made known by Schleiden and Schwann. But the first of these authors maintains that the individual men in society taken together only constitute the nervous system of society, and that society is devoid of all the other systems of the animal body. In their stead we have the intercellular structure, which, as he says, is produced by the nervous system, or, as the biologists would say, secreted by it. And what is this intercellular structure of society? As I understand him it consists chiefly of the material (and perhaps spiritual) *capital* of society, the product of human labor and thought. Sometimes he seems to give it somewhat the scope that Mr. Spencer gives to society itself, as including the soil, water, air, flora, and fauna, in short, the environment of society. But if this is all intercellular structure and is only the product of the nervous system and no part of that system itself, where is the consistency of speaking, as both our authors do, of telegraph lines as analogues of nerves?

Another question that will sometimes obtrude is: What are the limits of the social organism? Is it all of society, *i. e.*, the whole aggregate of individual men (social cells), or are there many societies? If the latter, how are these social organisms bounded and delimited? Are the lines political, or national, or racial, or ethnic, or linguistic?

¹ "L'Organismo Sociale é un Superorganismo?" Estratta dalla Riforma Sociale, Fasc. 3, anno III, Vol. VI, Tornio, 1896.

In any of these cases we have a remarkably heterogeneous lot of organisms, satyrs, centaurs, minotaurs, or beings still more inextricably mixed. Think of the number of German, Irish, African, and Chinese cells that have got into the American social organism! For it cannot be objected that the process is analogous to that of the mingling of hereditary strains by the process of reproduction. We are not dealing with physiological units—*gemmules*, *micellæ*, *biophores*, *plastidules*, and what not—that make up the stirp or germ plasm in heredity, but with the biological units, or cells, which are products of an entirely different order, vastly superior in size and complexity, and widely differentiated in all organic beings at all developed. No animal cell—not even in reproduction except the *spermatozoa*—ever passes entire from one organism to another. But these social cells stalk abroad at will and migrate singly or in droves, permanently or temporarily, from one organism to another.

If, on the other hand, there is only one social organism, embracing all individual men, is the picture at all relieved? Are not the heterogeneity and incongruity still further increased? How is that part of the social nervous system which is located in China or Soudan related to the part that is located in Paris or St. Petersburg?

But if such questions are not serious there are others that are so. Mr. Spencer was frightened a long way out of the doctrine by the specter of centralization which its logical results so clearly presented. All are agreed that government is the analogue of the animal brain. But consider the autocratic power that the brain wields over the animal organism! Is society coming to this? Huxley asked this question of Spencer. It has never been answered. Our authors are far from being socialists, indeed both of them manifest grave apprehensions from that quarter. The social organism theory leads direct into the socialist camp. Already M. Pioger has taken up the line of march. A year and a half ago the present writer pointed out^{*} that in so far as society can be said to represent an organism it must be one very low in the scale of development, one in which the parts are but feebly integrated and in which scarcely any controlling ganglion has as yet been formed. M. Pioger^{*} had, it seems, a year earlier, taken the same view, and urged it, as well he might, in defense of socialism. To this complexion it must come if society is an organism and government is its brain.

^{*} This JOURNAL, Vol. I, November 1895, p. 325.

A still broader question sometimes insists upon forcing itself in between the lines of such books as we are considering. What is society anyhow? Society is an *idea*. It is not a concrete material thing at all. It belongs to the same general class of ideas as a genus or a species. A genus is not an organism, neither is a species, nor any other classic group. These are conceptions, ideas. They are true Platonic ideas. This does not detract from their importance. The most important things in the world are ideas—virtue, honor, justice, liberty, truth itself. Now society is simply an idea, a relation of things, not a concrete object. It was with just such questions that the old mediæval philosophy—realism, nominalism, conceptualism, idealism, etc.—occupied itself. The essence of metaphysics is to objectify ideas, to make entities out of relations. The method of the advocates of the social organism theory is essentially metaphysical or ontological. It is not scientific. It imputes individual reality to a classic idea. It objectifies, or, as Comte says, personifies a property. The distinguished ethnologist, Major J. W. Powell, from his prolonged studies in savage philosophy finds that the human mind passes through three distinct preliminary states in its transition to the scientific state. These are (1) imputation, (2) personification, and (3) *reification*. These may be compared to the first two of Comte's "trois états," the first two being phases (not overlooked by Comte) of his theological stage, and the third being exactly commensurate with his metaphysical stage. Our authors are to be classed in this third stage of "reification." They have reified society, which is only an abstract idea.

It may be objected that society is something different from humanity as a whole, from the genus *Homo*, or, as some prefer, the species *Homo sapiens*. Grant this, and compare *a* society with a pack of wolves (*homo homini lupus*). Is a pack of wolves (held together by a consciousness not merely of "kind" but of advantage, the same as men in society) an organism? It is the same whether the object is offensive or defensive. Is a flock of sheep on a mountain side, or of wild geese flying in a triangle, an organism? Why is not any troop, or group, or herd, or swarm of gregarious animals an organism as well as a horde, or clan, or tribe, or race of men? Such are some of the questions to which the theory, logically carried out, gives rise.

It has been charged that the biologists are responsible for the prominence which the social organism theory has assumed. Nothing

* JULIEN PIOGER, *La Vie Sociale, la Morale, et le Progrès*, 1894.

could be farther from the truth. I have yet to learn of a single specialist in any branch of biology who has given it any degree of importance. The heaviest blow that has ever been leveled against it came from that type and prince of biologists, Professor Huxley (Administrative Nihilism). Both Darwin and Haeckel have recognized the true "analogy," but neither has laid great stress upon it. Mr. Spencer, although his *Principles of Biology* is certainly his masterpiece, makes no pretension to any specialty in biology, and might as well be called a psychologist or a chemist, but he is too good a biologist to swallow the doctrine in the large doses prescribed by the two authors now under consideration. The present writer has devoted the greater part of his life to two of the lesser but cognate branches of biology, and has made some excursions into certain of its wider fields, and while he fully acknowledges the existence of an analogy and yields to none in appreciating the inestimable value to sociology of biological principles, he is still decidedly of the opinion that more harm than good may come from the attempt to push such considerations farther than the strict limits of science and fact will warrant.

What then does it all amount to, and what is the real outcome of the whole discussion? Simply this, that the laws of evolution are cosmical in their sweep, and that whatever department of nature we look into we find them operating in the same way and bringing about the same results. We might as well say that organisms are planetary systems because the laws of evolution are working the same in both. We could with equal propriety claim that language is an organism, for everyone knows what remarkable analogies occur between organic and linguistic phenomena. We find analogies everywhere, and they only seem to prove the identity of different spheres of cosmic action when we forget that the universe is under the dominion of one grand law; but so soon as this is recognized, instead of wondering at the likenesses of things we learn rather to wonder at the diversities that nature presents.

There is no space left in which to deal with that mere corollary of the subject which is called social pathology. Both authors include it, only Senator Lilienfeld's work professes to be confined to this aspect. It is not so, but is really a summary of his great work, which M. Worms in his introduction to it says with some humor and much truth, could not be made so voluminous and discursive when written in the French language! Social pathology as treated by both authors

is simply the prognosis, diagnosis, prophylactics, and therapeutics of existing social evils. Aside from the alleged underlying biological principle and the somewhat novel terminology, the treatment of this side of the subject is not notably original, and in fact one is somewhat surprised to find that with such a profoundly scientific substratum the social questions discussed are, after all, both in their normal and their pathological aspects, little else than those that confront us in other economic, sociological, and even popular literature everywhere. The social organism theory is merely used as a thread upon which to string every conceivable question in the social world, and one of the chief recommendations of this theory is its use in furnishing the vehicle in which are thus borne and distributed to the world the fertile ideas and the ripened wisdom of such well-stored minds. Let us thank the "social organism" for this service to the world.

LESTER F. WARD.

The Liquor Problem in its Legislative Aspects. By F. H. WINES and JOHN KOREN. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1897

AN investigation has been carefully carried on under the direction of President Eliot, President Low, and Mr. J. C. Carter, subcommittee of fifty to collect data in relation to the liquor traffic. The purpose of the committee is to prepare a basis of fact for social judgments and to do this in a thoroughly impartial spirit. The volume here noticed forms one part of a series of studies. Its main topics are Prohibition in Maine and in Iowa, The South Carolina Dispensary System, The Restrictive System in Massachusetts, The Liquor Laws of Pennsylvania, The Ohio Liquor Tax, Liquor Laws in Indiana, and The Missouri Local Option Law. The main conclusions which are suggested by the data are summarized by the committee.

The results of the statistical researches are mainly negative; even if the student had command of government agencies for collecting the materials they could not be conclusive because the local conditions are so various and shifting.

The facts in regard to legislation are accurately and fully given, and the testimonies of intelligent witnesses throw light on the effects of the laws. At every step the inquiry is hindered by prejudices, partisanship, and hostile economic interests.